In addition to her political volunteerism with the Democratic Party, Ms. Fanning worked tirelessly for the Scranton Tomorrow ''Winter in the City'' project.

She is also a member of the Society of Irish Women.

Ms. Fanning also enjoys her role as aunt to her three nieces, Jennifer, Erin and Ellen and her nephew, James.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Kate Fanning on the occasion of this special honor. Her commitment to community service, citizenship and volunteerism serves as an inspiration to all and deserves the singular recognition she is receiving from the Lackawanna County Federation of Democratic Women.

THE RETIREMENT OF R. BYRON DAVIS

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2007

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of a great public servant to the State of West Virginia. After 45 years of federal service, R. Byron Davis recently retired and while he will surely be missed, he leaves behind a legacy of work that will benefit the State of West Virginia for years to corne.

Beginning his career in the 1960s, serving as a civil engineer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Huntington District and later the U.S. EDA, Byron went on to become the Chief of Engineering Service for the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Huntington. He has spent the last 20 years as the Economic Development Representative for the State of West Virginia with the EDA.

During that time, Byron has traveled to all 55 counties in the State, meeting with most County Commissions, conducting meetings with city officials, economic development authorities and public service districts. Through his hard work, many new projects have been funded and many long-term jobs have been created.

In my District, Byron was instrumental in providing us the support to establish multi-use industrial buildings and incubators to Marshall University, Beckley, Hinton and Huntington. He was also instrumental in helping fund industrial park projects in Wayne, Mercer, Raleigh, Fayette, Logan, Summers, Monroe, Greenbrier and Mingo counties. Most recently, he was instrumental in helping with my establishment of a Mine Safety Technology Consortium in the Third District, and I am grateful for his support of this important project that will be a catalyst in transforming West Virginia coal mining.

It has truly been an honor and a pleasure to work with Byron through the years on these and so many other important initiatives. I admire and respect his dedication to our state, his strong work ethic and his unwavering values.

I again commend Byron for great work that he has accomplished. Of course, of all of his accomplishments, Byron would likely say that he is proudest of his strong Christian family, his wife of 47 years, Marion, and his seven grandchildren.

I hope that in his retirement he will get to spend a little more time with ''his greatest accomplishment'' and enjoy the fruits of his labor, for they are many. I wish him the best as he begins the next chapter in what has been and continues to be a life lived well.

Byron, the great State of West Virginia thanks you.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 12, 2007

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 198, a resolution recognizing the significance of Black History Month. I am an original cosponsor of this important legislation.

Celebrated during the month of February, Black History Month allows all Americans to celebrate the accomplishments of African Americans, the famous and the not so famous, who have made strides in all walks of life.

I would like to share with you the words of one of the most noted African Americans in history—civil rights leader, Pan-African sociologist, educator, historian, writer, editor poet, and scholar, W. E. B. Dubois, who said:

''The shadow of a mighty Negro past flits through the tale of Ethiopia the shadowy and of the Egypt the Sphinx. Throughout history, the powers of single blacks flash here and there like falling stars, and die sometimes before the world has rightly gauged their brightness.''

This is time to celebrate the trials, tribulations, accomplishments and contributions of African Americans, who have certainly created and attained so much in this nation's young history.

As many of my colleagues know, many of our ancestors were brought here in the grips of iron chains on slave ships. Despite this demoralizing beginning, African Americans created a noble culture that encompasses the American spirit of survival through adversity.

I would like to share a few stories of my past, of why it is so important that we continue to celebrate Black History Month and continue to reflect on our country's struggle with the equality of all people.

More than 60 years ago, my parents, Robert and Ruth Cummings, grew up in rural South Carolina—near a small Clarendon County town called Manning. Some here may recall that Clarendon County would later have the dubious distinction of having its segregated mis-education of Black children successfully overturned in one of the Supreme Court's five Brown v. Board of Education school desegregation cases: Briggs v. Elliot.

I will never forget the painful lesson that my father taught us children about our Grandfather's death in Clarendon County.

When my father was a child in South Carolina, his father was taken back to their home after collapsing in church.

Granddad lay close to death as two white doctors arrived to examine him—an older doctor and his younger assistant.

Later on that moonless night, they emerged from the house onto the front porch.

They did not notice that my father was sitting over in the corner, alone in the dark.

''We should take this man to the hospital in town,'' the younger doctor pleaded. ''It's not worth the effort,'' the older doctor replied. ''He's just a N-*-g-g-*-r.''

My grandfather died on that dark, South Carolina night. As a result, I never had a chance to meet the man whose blood flows through my veins.

I never sat on his knee. He never took me fishing. I never learned about the struggles and joys of this strong and good man.

This, I think, is why I became convinced at an early age that we all must work together to create an America in which no life is considered to be without value.

For Americans of Color, the implications of this personal tragedy are clear.

Unable to depend upon the larger society to value our humanity, African American families have learned that we must create our own doctors and nurses.

We founded first-rate medical schools like those at Howard University College of Medicine, Meharry Medical College, Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science and Morehouse School of Medicine.

We have sent our children to study at world-class nursing schools like the ones in my District at the University of Maryland at Baltimore and Coppin State University.

And, in response, brilliant African American men and women have followed their calling to become our healers.

Some became famous—like Dr. Ben Carson at Johns Hopkins University.

Yet, despite all of these efforts, the American medical establishment has confirmed that ''unequal treatment'' all too often remains the rule, not the exception, in the medical care that Americans of color receive today.

In fact, African Americans receive inferior medical care—compared to the majority population—even when our incomes and insurance plans are the same. These disparities contribute to our higher death rates from heart disease, cancer, diabetes, HIV/AIDS and other life-endangering conditions.

Consider this: The December 2004 issue of the American Journal of Public Health contained important findings by a research team headed by President Clinton's Surgeon General, Dr. David Satcher, and Professor Stephen Woolfe of Virginia Commonwealth University.

The Satcher-Woolfe team examined data for the period of the Clinton years that they had gleaned from the National Center for Health Statistics.

During the 1990s, they found that more than 886,000 deaths could have been prevented if African Americans had received the same health care as White Americans.

My friends, when we consider our national health policy, we also are considering our national morality.

We must face the harsh truth: Being Black in America continues to be a medically dangerous condition. And being both Black and poor can be deadly.

But the crisis is spreading. Today more than 46 million Americans of every racial background are uninsured.

And, as a direct result, far too many Americans of every race and creed are dying before their time.

More often than not, health care issues are directly related to the broader challenge of providing access to economic opportunity.